



Steven W. Troxler  
Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture  
and Consumer Services  
*Veterinary Division*

R. Douglas Meckes, DVM  
State Veterinarian

February 16, 2017

To: North Carolina Poultry Producers Raising Organic Birds with Outside Access

From: R Douglas Meckes, DVM  
State Veterinarian

RE: Notification and Biosecurity Recommendations regarding the continuing outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

Given the recent finding of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in a wild duck in Montana as well as the 2014-2016 occurrences of HPAI in both backyard and commercial poultry involving 21 states, HPAI remains a significant threat to organic producers due to the required outside access. Epidemiological reports confirm that the virus is carried by certain types of wild migratory waterfowl that have been present in the Pacific, Central and Mississippi flyways. It has been found in the Mississippi flyway, which encompasses a portion of western North Carolina, so flocks in our state that may contact wild migratory waterfowl or their droppings are at high risk. The return migration of wild birds to Canada is ongoing, increasing the likelihood of exposure of US poultry to HPAI. To mitigate that risk it is imperative that the following steps be followed:

1. Move all poultry with outside access into biosecure housing immediately.
2. Implement strict biosecurity on these premises. Alert all company personnel, growers, farm workers and service personnel of the increased risk of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza. Especially focus biosecurity methods on preventing any exposure to wild waterfowl or their droppings.
3. Monitor all flocks for increased mortality or clinical signs consistent with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, and report any concerns to your Veterinarian, State Animal Health Official or Federal Animal Health Official immediately. The consistent clinical sign in all the current reported cases to this point has been a marked rapid increase in mortality over several days.
4. Please contact us with your questions or concerns.